



**Altus Southwest**

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP

*"Where Ideas Flow, and Prosperity Soars"*

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Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C.  
20554

May 13, 2011

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

It is the mission of the Southwest Economic Development Corporation to promote the benefits of conducting business in greater Altus, Oklahoma and provide information for companies and individuals interested in relocating here. We have much to be proud of: including a rich agricultural history, close ties with the Altus Air Force Base and an educated, dedicated and friendly workforce. But even with all our current advantages, there are certain things that larger metropolitan areas offer which we cannot. One of those is access to the latest broadband technology.

One of the primary reasons we support the proposed merger between AT&T and T-Mobile USA is because it will enable greater economic development in rural areas and smaller communities. Without question, nothing has had greater impact on our lives over the past decade than wireless devices and high speed Internet. These are not just tools for businesses, but also for families, civic organizations, schools and colleges. The merger between AT&T and T-Mobile will directly impact communities like ours through innovation, investment and job creation. It will give us greater leverage attracting new businesses because we will be able to offer access to the same modern mobile Internet technology as areas much larger than we are.

Like other small communities, Altus has to work extra hard to attract new business development. We recognize the need to modernize our infrastructure—while still maintaining the elements of our history that make us unique. We know we have a great deal to offer but we cannot truly compete until we can offer the kind of high speed Internet connections that people in other areas take for granted.

When Lawrence Strickling, Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information at the U.S. Department of Commerce spoke before Congress in 2009 he said, "If you are a small business owner without access to high-speed Internet, you are effectively operating with one hand tied behind your back."

The same holds true for small communities. We are in the business of promoting our advantages and, in today's world we cannot afford to settle for any disadvantages. We urge you to approve the proposed merger between AT&T and T-Mobile so that all regions of this country can benefit from the technological advancements that our neighbors in big cities enjoy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue background. The signature is cursive and appears to read "David B. Braddock".

David B. Braddock  
Altus/Southwest EDC

CC:

Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker